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Effects of atomic radiation

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 13 September 2006, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-first session the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item and held a general debate on it at its 17th and 18th meetings, on 26 and 30 October 2006 (see A/C.4/61/SR.17 and 18).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.[1]

4. At the 17th meeting, on 26 October, the Secretary of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation made a presentation.

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.4/61/L.7

5. At the 17th meeting, on 26 October, the representative of Australia, on behalf of Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, India, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" (A/C.4/61/L.17). Subsequently, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia,

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 46* and corrigendum (A/61/46 and Corr.1).

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Kazakhstan, Monaco, Norway, Slovakia and the United States of America joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 18th meeting, on 30 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.4/61/L.7 without a vote (see para. 7).

III. Recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

7. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Effects of atomic radiation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 60/98 of 8 December 2005, in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the work of the Scientific Committee, and of the release of its report on its fifty-fourth session,[1]

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

Noting the views expressed by Member States at its sixty-first session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

Noting that some Member States have expressed particular interest in becoming members of the Scientific Committee, and expressing its intention to consider the issue further at its next session,

Conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

1. *Commends* the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past fifty-one years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation, and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

2. *Reaffirms* the decision to maintain the present functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee;

3. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work of the Scientific Committee and of the release of its extensive report to the General Assembly, with scientific annexes, which provides the scientific and world community with the Committee's latest evaluations of the effects of ionizing radiation on human beings;

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 46* and corrigendum (A/61/46 and Corr.1).

4. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources;

5. *Endorses* the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for completing its present programme of work of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly, and requests the Scientific Committee to submit plans for its future programme of work to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session;

6. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of ionizing radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session;

7. *Emphasizes* the need for the Scientific Committee to hold regular sessions on an annual basis so that its report can reflect the latest developments and findings in the field of ionizing radiation and thereby provide updated information for dissemination among all States;

8. *Expresses its appreciation* for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

9. *Invites* the Scientific Committee to continue its consultations with scientists and experts from interested Member States in the process of preparing its future scientific reports, and requests the Secretariat to facilitate such consultations;

10. *Welcomes*, in this context, the readiness of Member States to provide the Scientific Committee with relevant information on the effects of ionizing radiation in affected areas, and invites the Scientific Committee to analyse and give due consideration to such information, particularly in the light of its own findings;

11. *Invites* Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly;

12. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

13. *Urges* the United Nations Environment Programme to review and strengthen the present funding of the Scientific Committee, pursuant to paragraph 11 of resolution 60/98, and to continue to seek out and consider alternative funding mechanisms to complement existing ones, so that the Committee can discharge the responsibilities and mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly;

14. *Invites* those Member States that desire to join the Scientific Committee to inform the President of the General Assembly, before 28 February 2007, of their interest, and decides to further consider the question of membership of the Scientific Committee in all its aspects, including financial implications, at the next session.